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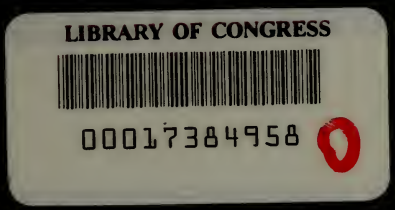
A MYSTERY OF THE DOME.

By F. C. LONG.



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A

MYSTERY OF THE DOME.

A Poem in Two Cantos.

BY FRANCIS C. LONG.

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A MYSTERY OF THE DOME.

Canto the First—The Defeat.

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A Mystery of the Dome.

CANTO THE FIRST—THE DEFEAT.

Dread War had reared its gory crest
From ocean East to ocean West;
With blood-red hand, and flaming brand
He lashed his steeds athwart the land!
Sown deeply had been the dragon's teeth,
And the sword of strife leaped from its sheath,
And warriors clad in Blue and Gray
Rose as in ancient Cadmus' day.
From Rocky Mountain's endless snows,
From Memphremagog's banks they rose:
From Florida's soft everglades,
And Louisana's dreamy shades;
From scarred Sierras of the West,

To blue Katahadin's frowning crest:
From deep Ontario's sounding shores,
And eke where towering Shasta glowers
Grim soldiers marched in stern array,
Mid bragging drums, and clarions' bray.
In North and South the widow's wail
Was borne upon the passing gale;
And bones of hosts of valiant men
Lay bleaching in morass and fen—
E'en Freedom reeled upon her throne,
And shuddered at the tocsin's tone!

A Jason rose in the land's behoof,
And yoked the bull with the brazen hoof;
And plowed the soil with a doughty might,
And scattered the foe from left to right.
The hero's praise let the nation's sing,
The hero's praise let the welkin ring;
Let his name stand high on fame's bead-roll,

And his fame resound from pole to pole!
Let his deeds be sung in every clime,
And his mem'ry live till the end of time.
Lo! the nation's heart shall be his shrine!
As the evening star his worth shall shine;
For he bore the sacred flag of the free,
And he fought the fight of Liberty!

The battle had raged the whole day through,
Between the armies of Gray and Blue;
The cannons roared, and the bugles brayed,
The soldiers cheered, and the stallions neighed,
And the plain was strewn with dying and dead,
And a shroud-like cloud o'er the field was spread,
As on we pressed to the hillock's crest,
Where, dimly seen in the darkling West,
The spires of Petersburg seemed to frown
In the smoke of the battle so dense and brown!
Our colonel that day had led a charge
On a powerful courser, roan, and large;

He frowned as black as the midnight sky,
And a terrible calmness dwelt in his eye
As he recklessly plunged in the desperate fight,
And wielded his steel with a doughty might:
Of all who met in the field that day,
And parried a stroke with a *moulinet.*
His blow was the strongest, his shout the loudest!
His sabre the longest, his steed the proudest!

The spring torrent rushing from mountain and hill
O'erwhelms in its volume its rival, the rill;
So the foeman met us in deadly array,
A hedge that glistened with steel and with gray—
As red as our blood were the gules of his bars,
As bright as our sabres the sheen of his stars;
As sullen his mien, and as vengeful his yell,
As the howl and the growl of the watch-dogs of hell!

Lo! the bison surrounded by wolves on the plain,

Quivers with fury, and charges amain—
His voice is the thunder! his eye gleams with wrath,
And he whelms like a whirlwind the foe in his path!
The timid may flee, and the weak stand aloof,
For the bravest are crushed 'neath the weight of his hoof;
But his foes pinched with hunger beleaguer him round.
And bury their fangs in his flanks at each bound;
Till o'ercome by numbers, by toil, and by pain,
He reels, and he falls on the blood besprent plain!

Thus gathered the foeman our squadrons around,
And hotly contested the vantage of ground;
While backward we staggered, whelmed and pressed,
By the terrible tide that knew no rest,
We rocked and swayed in the storm that passed

As the forest reels in the cyclone's blast;
The green hills shuddered and shook with dread,
As when Encelladus turns in his bed.

Maywood, our colonel, fell and swooned
Blanched and ghastly from many a wound;
And his neighing war-steed plunged headlong
Into the surging, hideous throng.
And we bore him sadly from the field,
While the din of battle wildly pealed,
And sullen and slow was our retreat,
With random shots, and unwilling feet,
And half the dead of our routed band
Were we forced to leave in the victor's hand,
Whose snarling guns, behind on the hill,
Continued to harass our column still.

Near the silvery Appomattox's wave
We dug that day full many a grave;
And laid our comrades down to their sleep

Where pines and cedars might o'er them weep,
And the vernal wind a tribute sing,
And the votive flowers crown them in spring;
And the vocal waters along the shore
A requiem murmur forevermore!

Brave Maywood was wounded even to death,
In terrible agony came each breath;
But his cast was of that Spartan mould
That does not quake as the flesh grows cold;
But with compressed lips, and scarce a moan
Await the touch of the dread unknown.
Gloomy and silent he ever had been,
Valiant afield, and loved by his men;
And few among us e'er had the nerve
To force the wall of his cold reserve:
His fine cut features tho' sad were stern,
A fire in his soul seemed ever to burn;
He seemed one under some awful doom,
And our hearts grew warm to this man of gloom.

A couch we made him, of boughs of pine,
On the river's bank at the day's decline,
The surgeon ministered to his need,
But the searching probe he did not heed.
His deep, sad eyes gazed vacantly round,
As one who wakes from a deathly swound.
"Are they fatal, these wounds?" at length he said.
The gray-bearded surgeon shook his head,
And answered: "Nay, that I do not know:
If I can staunch the internal flow
Of this gunshot-wound, here, in your breast,
You'll weather the storm—hope for the best."
Maywood returned with his old time sneer:
"You bid me hope when the grave is near,
Who hope had none when my arm was strong;
Who hope have none, save to do no wrong—
For my country's cause to-day to perish
Is the only hope that I can cherish!"

His head sank back, and he calmly slept

While around his couch a watch we kept,
And the white-crossed nurses moved about
Like vampires in some hideous bout,
And the surgeons looked ghastly and grim
As their knives, and saws hacked thew and limb;
The bare-armed stewards as ghouls appeared,
Haggard with toil, and gore besmeared;
While the sigh, the prayer, the oath, the groan,
Together arose to Heaven's throne.

Few were the words that the silence broke,
But friend to friend in a whisper spoke;
We talked of fording the Rapidan
What time in anger its waters ran,
And hill and forest returned the shock
Of the tide that plunged o'er sand and rock:
Like a hound in chase it seemed to bray,
And froth and pant as it roamed for prey!

As it swept along with vengeful roar,
And licked the rocks on either shore;

The waves engulfed a rider and steed,
And bore them down with furious speed,
And all regarded the soldier lost
Who saw him there by the surges tost;
The drowning soldier cried for aid,
And his comrades all looked on dismayed;
Till Maywood dared the turbulent tide,
And its hungry maw boldly defied,
And with manly arm he fought the wave
And snatched the man from a watery grave.
Of a thousand deeds we talked beside,
And we spoke of them with a soldier's pride —
Let others speak of him as they would,
We'd found him valiant, and kind, and good.
Then Maywood rousing, said, "Boys, I know
That ne'er again shall I face the foe;
My pulse grows feebler with each new breath,
And my heart is chill with the damp of death.

Just lay me under yon cypress tree,

And fire a volley—enough for me!
What! crying, Major, and, Captain, you?
There, Sergeant, desist, be a soldier true.
Your hands, old fellows—'twill be the last—
Ah, gently! or I may go too fast.
Fie, Major! this is beyond belief
That you turn your face from your parting chief!
When Galba shook Mecænas' hand
He shut his eyes. Here, Corporal Brand,
This ring with setting of sapphire hue
Present to your girl, if you find her true—
I doubt if she get it—nay, don't grieve.
Doctor, this package to you I'll leave:
I have a wound no surgeon can heal;
But when I slumber you'll break the seal.
Some logs on the fire—it grows so dark!
Did you hear Boots and Saddles then, boys?
Hark!
Good bye!—one word—when I'm under the sod

Be true to the flag! to yourselves, and to God!
The lurid light of the camp-fire then
Showed tears on the beards of sunbrowned men!
And the moon that peered thro' the leaves o'erhead
Grew pale as she gazed on the face of the dead!

We buried him in the midnight gloom,
A sentinel cypress guards his tomb:
The night wind sighed in the boughs o'erhead,
And mournfully whispered a tale of the dead.
The murmurous leaves they whispered long
Rehearsing a tale of a fearful wrong!
How a man was lured by a woman's smile,
How a life was lost by a woman's guile,
How a lover as brilliant as a Guise
Was betrayed a coquette's pride to please,
How blood was shed, and a heart was broke—
All this the whispering cypress spoke,
And its sobs arose on the evening air,
And its tears gleamed bright in our torches' glare!

A MYSTERY OF THE DOME.

Canto the Second—The Confession.

A Mystery of the Dome.

CANTO THE SECOND—THE CONFESSION.

My loves and hates are both extremes,
They are no tender maiden's dreams!
But passions fierce, beyond control
That thro' my being surge and roll!
Love leaves me not as cold as snow,
But fans my bosom all aglow;
For I'm not of that frigid school
Who gauge affection by the rule:
My heart is not a lady's lute
That every maid may tune to suit;
My love has but a single string,
Who touches that its wealth can bring.
My blood runs wild with tender fires!

I dream enwrapt with soft desires!
But woe betide the hapless he
Shall stand between my love and me!

My hatred is no common hate,
Nor time, nor change can it abate;
Dark purposes teem in my brain,
If banished soon return again:
And strive against it as I may
I cannot check my passion's sway.
When smarting 'neath the scourge of wrong
For quick revenge alone I long.
To be betrayed by one I trust
Is to my heart a poniard thrust:
But to be wronged by those loved well,
Steeps all my soul in gall of hell!

It is my purpose to relate
A story of my love and hate.

Fast by the Capitol resides
A Senator well-known to fame;
A daughter o'er his house presides
(Pauline shall be her only name.)
And she is young, and she is fair,
As winged cherubim on high;
Pactolus has enriched her hair,
And heaven's own blue is in her eye.

How she touched the sounding keys!
Rippling o'er their pearl with ease!
Fairy fingers flitting fleet,
Sounding strains so strangely sweet!
Sang she with such wond'rous skill
As to make my senses thrill;
And I listened, lingered long
Bound in subtile chain of song!
Could I see her seraph face,
And my heart not own her grace?
Could I see her sumptuous form,

And my bosom not grow warm?
Could I hear her silver strains,
And deny to wear her chains?
Nay, I bowed to her alone,
Humbly knelt before her throne,
At her feet poured my soul's treasure,
Yielded without stint or measure!
Her cheek was some pink-tinted shell,
Her cold-white bosom Arctic snow;
Her glorious, odorous tresses fell
A shower of gold her waist below.
I swear, her beauty drove me mad!
Her hands! were e'er such dainties seen!
The rose-red nectarine lips she had
Bright gleams of pearls there flashed between.
She was no prude, as time has proved,
Either in sentiment or *pose:*
Her eye encouraged—her tongue reproved,
It all was art that seemed repose.

Yet she could smile tho' icy cold,
And kiss a lie in feigning love;
And she could glow with warmth untold
When naught of passion did her move:
And she could school her silver tongue
Sad as sea-surges when they grieve;
And gloat on hearts with anguish wrung,
And seem a saint, and still deceive.
I told my tale as lover's will,
She heard as modest maidens do;
Her whispered answer sent a thrill
Of happiness my bosom through—
She said she loved, and I believed;
I trusted her—and was deceived!

A friend I had of Latin birth,
An artist of acknowledged worth;
His courtly mien and handsome face
In bower and hall found ample grace.

Caraffa was the artist's name,
And to the Capitol he came
To ply his art, and see the town;
For skill had won him much renown.
This girlish Tuscan seemed my friend,
And hours together we would spend;
His converse ever was of art,
And mine, alas, was of the heart.
I told him of the fair Pauline,
A maiden fit for beauty's queen,
That she should reign with regal grace,
By royal right of lovely face.
Caraffa laughed, and shook his head :
"Show me your paragon," he said,
"And if she prove so wonderous fair
Her portrait I will paint with care,
And your Pauline shall henceforth be
The sweet genius of Liberty."
Full much I longed to have him trace

The marvelous beauty of her face;
And she consenting—he begun
The work which has my life undone!

Ere long Pauline displayed a change,
Her ways anon grew cold and strange;
Reserve's chill mantle seemed to fall,
And shroud her spirit like a pall.
When by her side I chanced to be
Her manner, erst so frank and free,
Had lost its wonted cordial tone,
And she seemed pleased to be alone.
Abstract, and dreamy she would walk,
And scarce reply to all my talk—
The mind of her I held so dear
Seemed wandering in another sphere.
The day drew near with laggard stride,
When Pauline was to be my bride;
I bought her gems of rare device,

I gave her gifts of princely price;
And lavished all that gold could buy,
To deck her form, or please her eye;
And dreamed sweet dreams of bliss divine,
What time that I might call her mine.

The night before our wedding day,
Unto her side I took my way;
But when about to ring the bell,
A sudden fancy on me fell.
Caraffa's merry laugh I heard,
As silvery as the song of bird:
I did not ring; but cautious drew,
And gazed a latticed window through,
Whose clustering vines obscured the view.
About the walls rare pictures hung,
And naptha lamps their radiance flung:
Ormolu, buhl, and *objects d'art;*
Were ranged by bronze and Sevres ware;

Marqueterie, and flowers form part
Of garniture both rich and rare;
Groups by Costou, and Canova,
The shimmering marble mantle graced;
And tazzes from famed Genoa,
Wrought with the most exquisite taste.
My hand lay on the window sill,
Within the room was wond'rous still,
And hidden by the leafy screen
Spell-bound I looked upon the scene.
My senses reeled, e'en as I gazed—
Her perfidy my soul amazed!
Her head was pillowed on his breast;
She felt his heart! she'd oft felt mine!
His arms around her form did rest
Beneath the candelabra's shine.
I saw their glued lips—heard their sighs,
Marked well the transport of their bliss;
They stood confessed before my eyes,

One pulse, one breath, one thought, one kiss!
Her glorious wealth of amber hair,
Was mingled with his locks of jet—
I gnashed my teeth, the sight, I swear,
This brain of fire may ne'er forget!
My sight grew dim, my blood waxed chill,
My limbs would scarce obey my will,
As I turned from the hateful sight,
With thoughts far darker than the night;
And with an oath too dread to name,
I fled as stealthy as I came!

Not mine the soul to tamely bear,
A wrong that drove me to despair!
Not mine the soul to fawn and nod,
And kiss the hand that held the rod!
Not mine the heart to tamely bleed
Because a woman wrought the deed!
No! mine the heart so soft in love,
In hate as dire as bolts of Jove!

To the Capitol my steps were bent,
And to wreak revenge was my intent.
I paced the cold marmorean pave
Which harsh and sullen echoes gave;
Each dastard passion then was rife,
And rent my bosom as a knife.
The huge white Dome was heaved on high
Until it pierced the evening sky—
Few grander sights are seen than this
American Acropolis!
Wildly I walked in my fierce unrest,
The poisonous draught stung deep in my breast;
The dædal chalice that held my bliss,
Had proven as poison as Nonacris!
My golden visions, alas, had fled,
Each rose-hued picture was sear and dead;
The dove of hope had flown from my heart,
And naught remained but the mad'ning smart!
Naught but canker that gnawed my soul,

Naught but hatred beyond control!
Hate for the man who had caused my shame,
Contempt for the woman the world will blame!

I wandered 'neath the self same shade,
Where Clay and Webster oft had strayed;
Where Calhoun paced with pregnant mind,
And Douglass did retirement find.
How grand the work of scanning o'er
The mighty names that are no more;
The names that once such lustre shed
Now slumbering with the silent dead.
Their fame will long survive the tomb,
And immortelles will ever bloom
Above the consecrated mound
Where patriots sleep in rest profound.
Tho' ended is their fitful race,
And strangers now are in their place;
The teeming times are thickly fraught

With thought they uttered, deeds they wrought!
The works of men will ever last—
When we from scenes of life have passed
We leave our works, our worth, our fame,
Our honors, and, perchance, our shame:
The form grows cold and comes to naught:
But ne'er will perish deed or thought!

The sky o'erhead portended storm,
The clouds rolled up in threatning form
By wind and thunder driven;
And river and hill lay still as death,
And night crouched low and held her breath
Till the storm-shock should be given!

And as I paced the darkening shade
A hand was on my shoulder laid;
I turned, and in that lonely place,
My rival stood before my face!
And did I crush him then and there,

The hated cause of my despair?
Ah, no! I stood transfixed and dumb—
Caraffa's hour had not yet come!
He chatted gayly of the night,
Of fountain's gush, and glimmering light;
Extolled the glories of the Dome;
Drew parallels with scenes in Rome:
Talked learnedly, beneath the trees,
Of pediment, façade, and frieze,
Of Vatican and ancient art
The while I cursed him in my heart.
A straggling moon-beam lit his face,
With almost superhuman grace;
It crowned his lustrous raven hair,
With halo seraph well might wear;
He stood in beauty like some saint
Which monkish limners joyed to paint.

"Come to the Dome," at length he said,

"And view the scene beneath us spread;
An idle hour we may beguile,
And pleasure will repay the toil.
Erelong a storm will o'er us break,
The sky o'erhead becomes opaque;
And 'twill repay one far to roam
To hear a storm break o'er the Dome.
Fair Arlington may thence be seen,
Beyond the river's silvery sheen;
And Alexandria far below,
While at our feet the ebb and flow
Of the city's tide, is plain in view—
Who shun such sights I trust are few."

And then his nervous footsteps rang,
As up the massive stairs he sprang;
I followed him without a word,
And scarce an utterance I heard;
So deep I brooded in my heart,

The wrong in which he'd played a part.
He halted at the Lower Wing:
"'Tis, doubtless, an unusual thing
To enter here at such an hour,
But, thanks to fate, I have the power;
The key I hold will ope the door,
I've entered many a time before:
'Twould seem when I am quite alone,
My work has fuller, mellower tone."
The portal opened with a clang,
Which through the vaulted passage rang:
We entered and he led the way,
Through corridors which in the day
Seem like some fabled fairy cave,
With fretted arch, and shimmering nave,
While gleam of gold and porphyry,
Were like the spell of sorcery.

He drew a lamp from some quaint place,

With movements I could barely trace;
Its flame arose with sickly flare,
And lit the hall with a feeble glare;
As if unwilling through the gloom,
To light its master to his doom!
Encaustic tiling formed the floor,
Laid in an exquisite mosaic;
And foliated pillars bore
Designs Pompeian and Hebriac.
And all along the vaulted way,
There gleamed a gorgeous garniture;
Bright seccos glowed in brave array,
Which ages hence will rest secure.
Then on the eager artist sped,
Through many a twist and turn he led;
Through passage flanked by humid wall,
Broad corridor and lofty hall,
While groined roof and architrave,
Weird echoes to our footsteps gave.

Small pause is made to gaze or glance,
On fluted marble ordonnance;
Entablature and cornice gleam,
Beneath our pale lucernal beam;
And in its dim uncertain sheen
Alto-relievos could be seen
Of intricate and vexed design,
By Causici, and Gevelot;
And in the same faint flickering shine,
Another by Capellano.
And spectral painting, too, were there,
By Trumbull, Venderlyn, and Weire;
Powell, and Chapman,—works more grand
Have seldom come from limner's hand.

Full soon we reached the sinuous stair,
Which girds the broad Rotunda round;
The artist led the way with care,
And halted oft and looked around

To caution me in friendly way,
Lest I might miss my step and fall;
The lamp scarce lit the devious way,
And shadows lay black as a pall
As though dread terror shrouded all.
Pierced was the Dome in many a place,
Above, around us, and below;
Through which the moon-beams soft as snow
Thrust slender, lance-like shafts of light;
Fulgent for but a little space,
Then melting in the shades of night.
Still on and up we held our way;
His heart all joy, and mine a prey
To evil thoughts, and brooding hate,
For vengeful mood upon me sate,
And through my every fibre ran,
And made me more of fiend than man!
At last the dizzy height we paced,
Where pencil of Brumidi traced,

That strange *melange* of fact and folly;
Where men and Graces measure keep,
And in the wanton waltzes sweep,
And Washington appears so jolly.
And dire monstrosities were seen,
Of sages draped in red and green.
It may be by the lamp's dim light,
I did not view the work aright;
Such art methought should have a place,
On some antique Etruscan vase;
Since rifled guns but ill accord,
With sandaled feet, and Roman sword.
Then spoke my guide with laughing eyes:
"I hope to cause you much surprise;
Gaze on yon fresco, mark it well;
Long let your eyes upon it dwell;
A face is portrayed there most true,
Which must perforce entrance your view:"
His bantering words I did not heed:

God help Caraffa in his need!

Like poet in some blissful dream
The young enthusiast did seem;
He gazed as though his ravished eyes,
Saw pleasing scenes 'neath other skies;
Whilst 'neath our feet a dread abyss
Yawned gloomy as the brow of Dis;
And he who gazed might fancy well
He stood upon the verge of hell.

Meanwhile the storm in fury broke,
With angry gust, and levin stroke;
The thunder rolled with boom and crash,
And fell the rain with sudden dash;
The sounding roof was beat by hail,
Like grain beneath the thresher's flail.
Wild dæmons seemed to ride the blast,
And roar in mockery as they pass'd;
While voices seemed to come and go,

Among the corridors below,
What time the thunder broke amain
Above the din of wind and rain.
I gazed upon the artist's form,
He seemed unconscious of the storm;
His face was towards the ceiling turned,
And rapture in his dark eye burned.
Intense and earnest was his look,
That of a reverence partook;
A deep soul-worship one could trace,
In every lineament of his face.
As one who sees the Host arise
Before his penitential eyes,
Obscured by violet vapors, flung
From burning censers widely swung,
Caraffa stood with upturned face
As though invoking Heavenly grace.

My glances wandered over all,

The pictured tracery of the wall;
And there a face enchained my sight,
Despite the dim, uncertain light.
Then seethed my blood with sudden start!
Then fury raged within my heart!
Then senses reeled! I gasped for air!
I saw the face of Pauline there!

Hark! how the wild winds weep and wail!
Hark! how grim genii goad the gale!
The tempest howls in fury great,
Round peristyle and stylobate;
The reveling storm-sprites shriek and yell,
Like spirits 'neath the scourge of hell;
While quivers all the ponderous place,
As when Olympus shakes his base!
On! on! night furies with all speed!
God help Caraffa in his need!

The driving rain fierce onslaught made

Against each beetling colonnade;
The lightning flash'd with crash and blare,
And lit the scene with fiendish glare.
Boom on, dread thunder, in your sport!
Frown, scowling canopy of swart!
Blow, storm-king, all your whirlwinds blow!
Or drown, or mitigate my woe!
Lash into rage each neighing steed!
God help Caraffa in his need!

"Vile wretch!" I cried with vengeful sneer;
"Was it for this you brought me here?
Your craven soul too well I know;
You fain would gloat upon my woe!
Well may you curse the hapless day
Your shadow fell across my way:
Hate has more power than love or greed;
Meet night is this for violent deed!
No one is near the tale to tell—

Down! down! "I cried," down! down to hell!"
I seized the artist's trembling form,
Amid the howling of the storm;
And in my fierce and angry clasp,
He was a fawn in leopard's grasp.
He shrieked for mercy, but in vain;
His cries were drowned by battering rain;
I raised his figure light and frail
With ease above the iron rail,
Unmindful of his prayers of woe,
To cast him headlong far below.
The ponderous balister he caught,
And loud his patron saint besought:
High o'er the chasm he hung in air,
With strength imparted by despair.
His terror made him wond'rous strong,
He grasped the rail both stout and long:
I could not loose those slender hands,
They clung as close as iron bands.

Great beads of sweat stood on his brow;
(In fancy I can see him now);
His face was blanched a ghastly white,
His hair on end stood with affright;
His pleading look, his piteous cry,
Had softened one less hard than I.

I smote him in his upturned face;
That blow redounds to my disgrace!
His slender hands relaxed at last;
I saw the blood gush thick and fast;
I heard his last despairing yell,
As from the giddy height he fell;
And in another instant more,
A crash upon the distant floor.

Such sounds as then rang in mine ear,
Not oft are heard in mundane sphere;
The echoes of his last wild cry,

Seemed answered from the vibrant sky;
The thunder boomed with greater force,
The bellowing winds roared still more hoarse;
While livid lightning leaped and flashed,
And rain with fierce vehemence dashed;
It seemed as though the power Divine,
Displayed his wrath at deed of mine;
For horrid clangor or filled the Dome,
With shout of goblin, and of gnome,
And shook the ponderous masonry,
With all its pomp and blazonry,
As though all imps in Satan's realm
Were there my guilty soul to whelm;
Then suddenly as by a spell,
A deep, unbroken silence fell,
Save when a distant thunder-cloud,
Sent ominous mutterings, deep and loud.

Now that my rival was no more,

A mortal terror on me bore.
Far down below me lay the corse,
A shapeless bulk which ne'er might move;
And I, the victim of remorse
Stood trembling in the height above.
Ah! mortal man may never know
The agony, the exquisite woe,
Which crushed me with a mountain's weight,
When I recalled my crime so great.
I groaned in horror as I stood
There, guilty of Caraffa's blood:
Too late I felt the impious stain
Would brand me with the mark of Cain;
And till eternity grew gray,
My crime might not be washed away.

In vain I reeled beneath the blow
Which had rebounded from my foe;
In vain I cursed the hapless hour

Which threw my rival in my power.
Like some vile serpent held at bay,
That cannot strike its wary prey,
Which keeps securely from its path
The while it hisses in its wrath,
Until its fury runs so high
It strikes at every thing that's nigh:
Then 'gainst itself it will engage,
And blindly strike in baffled rage,
Though every stroke is full of pain,
And every wound a mortal bane.
So had I blindly dealt a blow,
Which gulfed me in a sea of woe;
My crime could be forgotten never,
My days of peace were gone forever!

With heart surcharged with deep despair,
I left the dark and silent Dome;
And downward traced the winding stair,

Resolved 'mid other scenes to roam.
I reached the street, I scarce know how,
Such anguish wrung my fevered brow:
I sought the city and its din—
Night stretched her hand and drew me in!

* * * * *

At last the roseate morning broke,
And tuned spheres their chords awoke;
And silver strains so sweetly rang,
As mount and sea together sang.
The twittering birds vied in their trills;
The cascades leaped upon the hills;
And votive flowers their incense paid,
As day, in golden robes arrayed,
Came forth with smiles and glorious beams,
Refreshed by sleep and happy dreams!

Battered and bruised with many a wound,
The corse of Caraffa was found;
So rent in its tremendous fall,

To man it bore but semblance small:
It lay upon the marble floor,
A shapeless mass and nothing more!
A fragment of the skull lay here,
A severed arm gleamed ghastly near;
A riven bone protruded there,
Mid gouts of blood, and locks of hair—
Flesh, bones, and teeth were scattered round,
As grain is cast upon the ground.

'Twas long before the populace knew
Whose mangled body oppressed their view.
But none e'er dreamed that a murderous might
Had hurled him from the terrible height.
Twas thought, unpitied and unseen,
He'd embraced grim death, and not—Pauline!

TWO FUGITIVES.

Mary Quantrelle.

Mid the clash and the crash of the braggart drums,
In the beams of morning bold Stonewall comes!
And suddenly bays the watchful dog
As his column breaks from its shroud of fog!

Each courser's mane with the dew is damp,
And the streets resound with a martial tramp,
And each soldier's face gleams stern and brown
As the serried squadrons come marching down!

Lo! the trumpets blare and the bugles play,
And silver shimmers mid gold and gray!
While, bound to the fleet war-stallions' tails,
The Stars and Stripes inglorious trails!

It was thus bold Jackson's warlike band
Passed Frederick City, in Maryland;
While his rumbling *caissons*, far below,
Growled loud defiance to Northern foe!

The teeth of the dragon had long been sown,
And Liberty trembled upon her throne;
For a tyrant sought to o'erwhelm the free,
And the blood flowed deep from sea to sea!

With dauntless mien, and an eye of scorn,
Dame Quantrelle stood in her door that morn,
While the hostile column, with banners high,
And cymbaled music marched slowly by.

In time like a chime was the click and clank
Of scabbard against the courser's flank;
And eastward, as far as the eye could see,
An army wound o'er hill and lea.

A serpentine line the mist half veils,
While bayonets gleam like a viper's scales;
Weak, wavering women wildly wept,
While that serpent rattled, and hissed, and crept!

When the sun went down on the night before,
The old flag floated o'er many a door;
When morning broke and the foe came down,
But *one* could be seen in all the town.

In brave disdain of the raiding band,
Dame Quantrelle held a flag in her hand,
And waved it wide in the dewy breeze,
And, like the buzzing of angry bees,

A threatening murmur at once arose
Along the line of astounded foes;
And the soldiers glared with eyes of flame,
But her Spartan courage naught could tame.

"Down with that flag!" cried one of the crew,
When the Stars and Stripes met the soldiers' view;
And a burly sergeant, grimed and browned,
Sprang on the porch with a panther's bound.

And while hoarse plaudits around him rise,
He rends the banner before her eyes,
And throws the fragments into the street,
Where the soldiers tread them under their feet.

Still stood the lady firm as an oak,
And a look of scorn o'er her visage broke,
And her blue eyes flashed fearless and stern,
And an angry flush on her cheek did burn.

And the man was cowed by the woman's pride,
And a blush of shame his bronzed face dyed.
"Misguided coward," she calmy said,
"Shame and dishonor will follow your tread;

Our flag is sacred, and for this deed
A traitor's doom shall be your meed.
Oh, God forbid that a son of mine
Should raise his arm against Freedom's shrine!"

Then she took a flag from a friend hard by,
And proudly waved it again on high;
While close around her the foeman pressed,
With glittering guns aimed at her breast.

The roweled heel of the sergeant rang,
As upon the porch again he sprang;
And he tore the flag from the lady's hand,
And threw it 'neath the feet of his band.

And a hideous cheer arose once more,
Deep and hoarse as the breaker's roar,
And from bearded lips the word was sped,
"Let her die the death!" the soldiers said.

A rider with steed caparisoned gay,
Now breaks through the hedge of steel and gray:
And the rabble parts to right, and left,
As billows part by a vessel cleft.

"Hold! cried the horseman reining his steed,
Disgrace not our cause by such a deed!"
And the men slunk back, awed and abashed!
As a pack of hounds which the whip has lashed.

On moves the column with arms agleam,
And banners afloat in the morning's beam,—
Ah! many a soldier who rides to-day,
Will never return from this bold foray!

* * * * *

Oh, greater than greatest Spartan dame!
Oh, heroine of unending fame!
What might can the Union of States e'er part,
When our women show such strength of heart!

Oh, bravest of all our sisters brave,
Can tyranny e'er our sons enslave?
What terrors can daunt the soldiers true
Who can boast of mothers as staunch as you?

Lo! o'er all the land from east to west,
The old flag floats the proudest and best!
Its gules and azure in triumph wave
O'er blue and gray in a common grave!

The peaceful pipe and lute are heard,
And our souls no more with wrath are stirred;
And eyes of love and tenderness beam,
Which erst have flashed like a dagger's gleam!

And our lovely sisters joy to twine,
Bright immortelles for the hero's shrine;
And North and South shall be proud alway
Of the dame who stood by our flag that day!

A Summer Night.

Hushed is the swallow's brood beneath the eaves,
Hushed is the low of kine among the hills;
The weary earth no longer toils and grieves,
But grateful slumber all her bosom fills.

A dreamy, drowsy hum comes from the bees,
Who guard their Hyblean treasures till the morn;
Opaline dew-drops glisten on the leas,
And pearls bedeck the golden-crested corn.

The butterfly sleeps on the thistle's bloom,
With folded wings ornate with floss and flake;
And from the distant torrent through the gloom
Accented echoes tremble as they brake.

Anon the tuneful cricket wakes his note,
A minstrel he, who sings his mistress' praise;
And on the stilly air so gently float
The odorous scents of Flora's sweet estrays.

Lo! in the North the dark Egyptian queen
Displays her gorgeous jewels to the night,
Who stretches forth his mantle as a screen,
And strives to shut their radiance from the sight.

The wanton night-wind toys the ripening grain,
While Hesper pales his shimmering beacon light;
Calm beat the pulses of the tranquil main,
And waves of sound break on the hush of night.

The light-winged Zephyr climbs yon lattice thro',
His bland breath filling all the ambient air;
His fair, young visage bright with smiles and dew,
And scent of clover in his amber hair.

The soul has harmonies of sense unknown,
Strains too ethereal for mortal ears,
As angels hear the soft, liquescent tone
Awakened by the vibrant crystal spheres.

Ah, me! what thought a summer evening brings!
What sweet beautitudes the bosom fill!
The buoyant spirit soars on franchised wings,
And revels in the dews the heavens distill!

Forgotten is the world, its strife, its guile;
We float above its traffic and its din;
We feel the selfishness of beauty's smile,
And learn that brilliant dolls are void within!

Oh, summer night! Oh, fair florescent vales!
Where cattle chew their cuds by limpid stream;
I long me for the hush of sylvan dales
Where I may lie upon the grass and dream!

With slumber on each sweet, voluptuous lid,
Fair Daphne lies upon her couch of snow;
Ah! wherefore should such loveliness be hid?
I fain would see her pure dreams come and go!

ERRATA.

On page 9. "Beleagner" should read beleaguer. On page 35. "Hebriac" should read Hebraic.